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stanchion support

This invention relates to a support means for a stanchion, which is particularly, but not exclusively in the form of a table leg.

Collapsible legs for use with folding tables and chairs and the like are well known. The upper ends of the legs can be attached in a hinged arrangement to the underside of the body of the item of furniture, so that they can be folded up underneath the body for storage. There are many known types of folding mechanisms which utilise a variation of designs.

The chief aims of any folding mechanism are twofold. Firstly, the mechanism must be able to adequately support the leg when it is extended, so that the table or other article, will not collapse during use. Secondly, the mechanism must facilitate ease of use, so that the leg can be readily extended and collapsed.

One design which has proved successful comprises a pair of legs constructed from a single U-shaped component, in which the transverse interconnecting section is attached in a hinged arrangement to the underside of the table. The legs are provided with a support element which is substantially similar in size and shape to the legs component, and which is disposed alongside the legs. The two components are rigidly attached together at their outer ends in such a way that the two adjacent transverse interconnecting sections are resiliently biased together, but can be pulled apart.

When the legs are unfolded the interconnecting section of the support element is pulled away from the legs and placed in sockets provided on the underside of the table. With this arrangement the biasing together of the components holds the

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support element in the sockets. When the table needs to be folded up for storage, the support element can be removed from the sockets by hand, and the two components can be folded flat against the underside of the table top.

The present invention is intended to provide an improved version of the above mechanism.

According to the present invention a sliding pivot means for a support element which is used with a stanchion which is hinged to the item with which it is used and from which it can be unfolded, in which one end of the support element is rigidly attached to the stanchion and the opposite end is provided with a substantially transverse portion extending therefrom, comprises a slide, a sleeve provided with a slide pin extending in substantially the same plane as the sleeve, and a socket substantially parallel with said transverse portion, and in which the sleeve is located on the transverse portion, and the pin is located in the slide, the sleeve being adapted to rotate about the transverse portion, and the pin to rotate in the slide, the pin moving along the slide when the stanchion is rotated about its hinge, and the socket being adapted to receive the transverse portion when the stanchion is in a fully unfolded position.

Preferably the slide is curved to follow the path of the transverse portion of the support element as the stanchion is rotated about its hinge.

In one construction the socket is provided in between the underside of the item and the slide. With this arrangement the slid pin reaches the end of the slide, and the transverse portion and the sleeve rotate around the end of the slide, and into the socket.

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In a preferred embodiment the item is an item of furniture. The furniture can be a table, and the stanchion can be a table leg. Further, the table leg can be part of a U-shaped two-leg component, the transverse interconnecting portion of which is hinged to the underside of the table. The support element can be substantially the same shape, and can be disposed along side the legs. The two components can be fixed together at their outer ends, in such a way that the two interconnecting portions are resiliently biased together, but can be pulled apart.

The legs and the support element can be tubular in shape, and can be constructed from any suitable material, for example wood or metal, for example steel.

The invention also includes an item provided with a sliding pivot means for a support element to be used with a stanchion which is hinged to the item, as described above.

The invention can be performed in various ways, but one embodiment will now be described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which :

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a sliding pivot means for a support element according to the present invention; and,

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the sliding pivot means as shown in Figure 1, in a different configuration.

As shown in Figure 1 a table 1 is provided with a cylindrical leg 2 which is hinged to a table support spar 3 by means of a circular aperture 4. The leg 2 is provided with a support element 5, the outer end of which 5a is rigidly attached to the outer end of the leg 2a (as shown in Figure 2), so that

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there is a V shaped configuration between the leg 2 and the element 5. The inner end 6 of the element 5 is provided with a substantially transverse portion 7 extending therefrom.

The support element 5 is provided with a sliding pivot 8 comprising a slide 9, a sleeve 10 provided with a slide pin 11 extending in the same plane as the sleeve 10 and a socket 12. The sleeve 10 is disposed around the transverse portion 7, and the pin 11 is disposed in the slide 9. The sleeve 10 can rotate about the transverse portion 7, and the pin 11 can rotate on its own axis in the slide 9.

The pin 11 is adapted to move along the slide 9 when the leg 2 is rotated about its hinge 4, and the socket 12 is adapted to receive the transverse portion 7 when the leg 2 is in the fully unfolded position.

The leg 2 and the support element 5 are parts of substantially U-shaped leg pair and support element components. An opposite sliding pivot arrangement is provided at the opposite edge of the table 1.

As shown in Figure 1 the leg 2 is in the folded position, disposed adjacent to the underside 13 of the table 1. The pin 11 is disposed at the inner end 14 of the slide 9, and the pin 11 is in a rotational position to allow the sleeve 10 and the transverse portion 7 within it to be disposed adjacent to the transverse portion 15 of the leg 2.

As shown in Figure 2 the leg 2 is in the unfolded position. The pin 11 has been moved through the slide 9, and the pin 11 and the sleeve 10 have been rotated in a clockwise direction, to allow the transverse portion 7 to be disposed within the socket 12. The transverse portion 7 has been pulled apart

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from the leg 2 to allow it to be moved about the end 16 of the slide 9. The inner ends of the leg 2 and the support element 5 are resiliently biased together due to their outer ends 2a and 5a being rigidly attached together. As a result the transverse portion 7 is held in the socket 12 and the leg 2 is safely held in position.

To restore the leg 2 to the folded position the transverse portion 7 must be pulled from the socket 12 by hand, and the pin 11 must be moved and rotated back through the slide 9, in a reverse of the process described above.

Thus a table provided with a U-shaped legs component and a support element which is substantially similar in size and shape and in which the outer ends of the legs and the support elements are fixed together, is provided with a novel folding and supporting system which adequately supports the leg, and can be readily used.

The system is also provided with a small number of simple moving parts which are easy to construct. Further, the transverse portions of the legs and the support elements cannot be pulled too far apart due to the support element being held in a slide. This increases the lifespan of the leg.